

SSUDAC Meeting Summary
May 15, 2014

Members Present: Brian Abramson, Carmen Camacho, Don Hague, Jon Lourie, Amy Poisson (United Therapeutics), Mel Tull, Suzy Zusy

Members Absent: Ernest Bland, Dan Figueroa

Call to Order and Introductions:

- Mr. Mel Tull, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Reports:

Police Briefing & Crime Report

Lt. Alan Felsen, Montgomery County 3rd Police Precinct

- The new police station at 1002 Milestone Dr. opened on May 14th, 2014. The ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house is scheduled for June 7th.
- The suspect in the January and February Wells Fargo bank robberies was arrested after robbing the same Georgia Ave. location a third time.
- Two unrelated robberies occurred at the McDonald's restaurant on Colesville Ave. Officers were able to apprehend both suspects shortly after the incidents.
- Thefts from vehicles parked in garages continues to be the only serious crime trend. Lt. Felsen advised that citizens should ensure valuables are concealed before leaving their vehicles.
- Summer police staffing levels for the Urban District should be slightly higher than last year.

New Business

- The committee voted unanimously to approve the April meeting summary for the record.

Purple Line Update for Downtown Stations

Monica J. Meade, Maryland Transit Administration

- The Purple Line was recommended for full funding in the President's budget. Once the funds are appropriated by Congress, the construction of the line (scheduled for the end of 2015) can begin.
- The line's environmental impact statement was accepted, and the RFP for the line's construction should be out in June.

- The Maryland Transit Administration has been working with the state's Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) and other training partners to prep for the large influx of jobs the construction of the line will bring to the region.
- Mr. Mel Tull asked if the state's DLLR is being assisted by the federal DLLR. Ms. Meade replied that she was not sure, but that a first batch of 16 preferred training partners and small businesses had been identified.
- Fares for the line will be on a reusable smart card similar to WMATA's SmarTrip card, with a similar flat fare policy.

The Blairs, Phases 1 & 2

Sri Velamati, Tower Companies & William Kominers, Lerch, Early & Brewer

- Mr. William Kominers and Mr. Sri Velamati provided an overview of Phases 1 & 2 of The Blairs' redevelopment.
- The Tower Companies have partnered with design firms Design Collective and Sasaki Associates.
- The Tower Companies are preparing to file the Blair Towers site plan with the planning board by the end of May or early June. The site plan is expected to be approved before the end of 2014, with demolition commencing shortly thereafter.
- Construction is scheduled to begin in mid 2015, and finish at the end of 2017.
- This specific portion of the Blairs redevelopment focuses on the 6-acre area bordered by East-West Highway, Eastern Ave. and the Silver Spring Metro Station.
- All parking for the buildings will be underground with a single entrance on Eastern Ave., except for the current existing aboveground garage on Colesville Rd, which will be extended an additional 6 stories. All contractor and construction parking will be located in a nearby staging area.
- The buildings will have separate loading dock areas and elevators for deliveries and any new tenants.
- Amenities for the buildings and site include a public dog green (approx. 5,400 square feet), pedestrian bridges connecting the buildings, rooftop gardens, a public mews, a community garden and communal rooftop dining & social areas.
- Amenities available during construction will be a temporary green area, a dog run and a small community park with a water feature.

- The number of bedrooms and types of units for the buildings has yet to be determined.
- The buildings in phases 1 and 2 range from the shortest at 5 stories, 7 stories, 14 stories and the tallest at 18 stories.
- Ms. Suzy Zusy asked about purposes of the pedestrian bridges between buildings. Mr. Velamati replied that it is to give residents in the smaller buildings covered access to the amenities in the larger buildings, in addition to fostering an overall sense of community.
- Mr. Jon Lourie asked if the project would need to be reviewed by any D.C. agencies since a portion of the project is on the District line. Mr. Velamati said that the review by the public space review committee would be minimal, as the only portion of the project that is on the line is a bioswale (used for stormwater management) and a sidewalk.
- Mr. Don Hague asked about the location of the building's condensers. Mr. Velamati stated that they are located on the roof of the two high rise buildings.
- Mr. Mel Tull asked about any public areas that would be the responsibility of the Silver Spring Urban District for maintenance. Mr. Velamati said that this would only be the case in the more residential areas of the site plan, rather than the commercial, and that the site's plan is following all Urban District requirements along both state and county roads.
- Ms. Carmen Camacho motioned to write a letter of support for the project once the site plan is filed, with Mr. Jon Lourie seconding. The committee voted unanimously to write the letter.

State Highway Project Updates

Ms. Yvette Freeman, Chief of Operations, Silver Spring Urban District

- Ms. Freeman recently reached out to members of SHA for an update on the Urban District's list of areas of concern from earlier in the year. She has not yet received a response.
- The repaving of Georgia Ave. is nearly complete, with only curbside areas remaining. Rain has delayed SHA's bus pad work for a number of weeks.
- Curb repairs were recently made south of the CSX bridge.
- An accident involving a vehicle and a bicyclist recently occurred at the 16th St. Circle on May 14th. SHA maintains that they do not have any plans to perform any work at the Circle at this time.

- Ms. Freeman's main concern has been the substandard quality of work from both SHA and its contractors. Ms. Freeman suggested adding conditions to meet both County and Park & Planning standards to future RFPs for SHA's contractors.
- Ms. Carmen Camacho motioned to write a letter to ask the County Executive to bring the various issues with SHA to the attention of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. Mr. Don Hague seconded and the committee voted unanimously to write the letter.
- Mr. Tull brought up the idea of advising the County Executive and County Council to advise the Planning Board on reviewing or revising the Silver Spring streetscape standards.

Urban District Report

Ms. Yvette Freeman, Chief of Operations, Silver Spring Urban District

- Ms. Freeman announced that she would be leaving the Silver Spring Urban District at the end of the month. She thanked the members of the committee, the Urban District and others for their work and support in her time as Chief of Operations.

Silver Spring Regional Area Director's Report

Mr. Reemberto Rodriguez, Director, Silver Spring Regional Center

- The Council has accepted the County Executive's recommended operating budget for FY15. Included in this budget was an extension of the Van Go's operating days and hours for 6 months.
- The Silver Spring Parking Lot District (PLD) will loan the Bethesda PLD \$1.5 million for 1 year, after which Bethesda will pay the money back to Silver Spring.
- Other items included in the PLD budget were enhanced garage maintenance and cleaning, including an extra weekend cleaning crew.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.